

it. The bill is designed to create a pure district concept, which means you nominate by district and elect by district. The discussion Thursday involved what can happen if you allow the nomination by district then the election at large. I had mentioned an existing case in Omaha right now with reference to some people running for the city council seat, which is a pure district method. You nominate by district and elect. There is an individual who is an admitted, he says, former drug dealer. He is supported by people who are associated with the mayor, by a number of business people outside the community, and they have encouraged him to run to represent our district. Such a person, with admitted drug dealing in his past, would never be put forth by any of these groups to represent them. Under the current system, where the nomination is by district and the election is by district, the community makes a determination. If the drug dealer is not acceptable to the community, the drug dealer will be defeated in the General Election. But, if it were an election at large, then those interests outside the community could rally enough support to put such a person in office, supposedly, or purportedly, representing our district. But he would be a mouthpiece for interests outside the district. I don't want such a set of circumstances to exist with reference to the county board. If you adopt Senator Lynch's amendment, the community, during the primary, can make it clear which individual is desired by giving that individual more votes. In the at large, which means the city as a whole votes, there would likely be a rejection of the individual that the community adopted. It is perceived in Omaha that the interests of the people in the community from which I come have interests which run contrary to those of the city at large. It is a known fact, by those who live in the area from which I come, that our interests are not given serious consideration by the county board members. Any governing body should be a portraiture in miniature of the society that is to be governed. In this instance there has never, in the history of the Douglas County Board, been a nonwhite member or a female member. It has always been comprised of white males. That can be done, because most of them have had name recognition which is almost a certain bet to ensure election. Others have had sufficient financial and political backing, so that in an at large system nobody, who is not well known, or does not have similar backing would have any opportunity or chance against such individuals.

SENATOR MORRISSEY: One minute.